

AN ANALYSIS OF TEACHING PERIODICALS FOR AGING EDUCATION
CONTENT

T. Joy Wimsatt, B.A., M.Ed.

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APPROVED:

Patricia A. Moseley, Major Professor
Susan B. Eve, Minor Professor
James D. Laney, Committee Member
John C. Stansell, Chair Teacher Education and
Administration
M. Jean Keller, Dean of the College of Education
C. Neal Tate, Dean of the Robert B. Toulouse
School of Graduate Studies

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Ninety elementary public school teachers were surveyed to find out where they obtained their teaching ideas. Seven popular elementary-level teaching periodicals, dated 1989-1999, were analyzed for aging-related content, and compared with 27 of the National Academy for Teaching and Learning about Aging (NATLA) aspects of aging recommended for students' learning.

Results indicate that public elementary teachers obtain their teaching ideas from various places: teaching institutes or workshops; other teachers; ideas or lessons they develop themselves; and teaching periodicals. A large percentage obtain lesson ideas from teaching periodicals that they browse or read. This finding may assist NATLA in making recommendations to particular editorial boards. Surprisingly, few teachers obtain their teaching ideas from state and local curricular mandates.

When the periodical issues were analyzed, aging-related content was categorized in four ways: informational articles with selected teaching or learning activities; articles describing intergenerational programs or activities; book reviews with selected learning activities; and book review titles mentioning older adult characters. Category totals among the 7 periodicals were highest in book review titles mentioning older adult characters and book reviews with selected learning activities.

The content was compared to NATLA's recommendations for students' learning.

The findings were not significant. The aging aspect that appeared most often in book reviews with selected learning activities was that most living things have life cycles of patterned biological changes, and/or that death and disability can occur at any age.

Whether we formally teach them about aging or not, children learn about it. Earlier studies indicate that even preschool children may stereotype the aging process and/or older adults. Curricular and instructional ideas provided in teaching materials, even in an informal format can provide education, which prepares children for real life experiences.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Americans are gradually becoming aware of a silent but strong revolution that has been going on for many years. This “longevity revolution” is powerful enough to challenge and alter many of our basic attitudes, values, policies, and institutions. Since the turn of the century, the total American population has tripled, but the population of adults aged 65 and over has grown seven times. Children born today are likely to live longer lives than those of any previous generation (Pratt and Castendyk, 1978).

This “age wave” (Dychtwald, 1990) affects families, careers and retirement, education, medicine, business, government, and distribution of public resources (Pratt, 1992). While this revolution has profound implications for all American citizens, it is particularly important to the youth in our classrooms. After all, the youth of our nation will be dealing with aging issues throughout their lives (Pratt and Castendyk, 1978).

Children learn about aging whether we formally teach them about it or not. The issue is not whether they learn, but rather what they learn about the process of growing up and growing older. If left to happenstance, children learn about aging by simply absorbing whatever they see or hear, often without being able to distinguish between fact and fiction. So much of the time, what children learn about aging is based on stereotypes of older adults and on myths about the aging process, which are deeply entrenched in our culture. These stereotypes and myths are transmitted from one generation to another

through our language, humor and literature, and all the media by which we perpetuate the knowledge, values and attitudes of our society (Pratt, 1992).

Not all that children learn about aging is negative. Yet research demonstrates that, even at a very early age, children may already have internalized ideas that can serve as a breeding ground for ageism (age prejudice) and gerontophobia (fear of aging). Similarly, not everything young children learn about the aging process is false. Yet, again, research shows that what children know about growing up and growing older is a mixture of truth and misinformation. Since they will live out their lives facing new challenges on age-related issues that will require intelligent decision-making based on knowledge and comprehension, not on myth and misinformation, America's youth need to learn about aging (Pratt, 1992).

Given the need for children to learn about aging, one wonders about the preparedness of K-12 teachers to teach this content and to use appropriate methodology. Typically, teachers obtain new content and instructional methods from many sources: state and local curricular mandates, state adopted textbooks, professional development workshops, university coursework, the Internet, and teaching periodicals or magazines. Some of the most creative teachers will develop and use their own ideas.

The National Academy for Teaching and Learning about Aging (NATLA) promotes education about aging-related issues in K-12 schools and teacher preparation colleges and universities. It encourages the infusion of topics on aging into curriculum and instructional materials for different subjects and across grade levels. Since it was founded in 1983, NATLA (formerly the Center for Understanding Aging) has played a

leading role in advocating public education about aging at all levels, with emphasis on elementary and secondary schools. NATLA provides training, consultation, and resources to organizations across the United States. NATLA is based at the University of North Texas (UNT), through collaboration with UNT's College of Education, Department of Applied Gerontology, and Texas Institute for Research and Education on Aging. NATLA's northeast office is located in Southington, Connecticut (Couper and Pratt, 1999).

Young people receive practically no formal education about later life issues because aging topics are misrepresented or non-existent in K-12 curricula, and few classroom teachers have any formal education about aging. Deliberate educational intervention is necessary in order for young people to develop realistic and balanced views of aging (NATLA, 1995).

This study addressed the need for deliberate educational intervention to solicit appropriate and relevant aging education curricular ideas for K-6 teachers from other practicing teachers knowledgeable in the field and from aging education experts. It suggested the need for elementary level teachers to try new ideas and materials in lessons about aging.

The study stands to promote efforts that might accomplish the following practical outcomes: helping to educate classroom teachers about aging, providing teachers with appropriate aging education teaching or learning methods and strategies, and informing teachers of types of appropriate intergenerational activities which they might integrate into their current informal curricula. The curricular and instructional ideas provided in

teaching materials, even in an informal format, can provide education that prepares children for real life experiences.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was two-fold in that it determined which teaching periodicals or magazines elementary teachers browsed or read and then analyzed the ones dated 1989-1999, for quantity and type of content addressing concepts and ideas about aging.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to ascertain whether some of an elementary school teacher's classroom lessons come from teaching magazine sources and to identify and analyze teaching ideas and learning activities about aging which appear in four commercial press teaching periodicals and three professional teaching journals.

Research Questions

1. Where do elementary teachers find their teaching ideas?
2. Specifically, how much do elementary teachers rely on teaching periodical articles and/or magazine articles for their teaching ideas?
3. If teaching periodicals frequently browsed or read by elementary teachers contain articles addressing ideas, concepts, and classroom activities regarding teaching about aging, how is the content presented?
4. If teaching periodicals frequently browsed or read by elementary teachers contain articles addressing content regarding teaching about aging, how does the content compare with NATLA's recommended aging-related content?

Definition of Terms

1. Magazine: in this study, another word for periodical
2. Periodical: a publication issued at regular intervals

Assumption

Elementary school teachers of K-6 students read and use instructional ideas, lessons, and activities provided in teaching magazines as part of the informal classroom curriculum.

Methods and Procedures (brief description)

Part I

A short survey instrument (see Appendix A) was administered to the K-6 teachers of a suburban school district asking them to identify sources they used to locate teaching ideas and lessons for their particular classrooms or grade levels.

Part II

The most popular teaching periodicals, based upon highest circulation figures, were analyzed for the number and types of articles, ideas, and activities about aging in the issues dated 1989-1999. A periodical analysis form (see Appendix B) was used to record data pertaining to any teaching periodical's content on aging education. If a teaching periodical contained any article(s) with aging-related content, the following factors were identified: the periodical's name, the issue's publication date, the page length of the article, the title of the applicable article, the author of the article, the author's experience with aging education (if any), the article's target audience, and the purpose(s) or main message(s) of the article. The purpose(s) of the article were then

categorized, using a rubric format, as one or more of the following: “informational”, “suggests specific teaching or learning strategies and methods”, “describes intergenerational program or activities,” and any other categories which may have emerged during the analysis.

After reporting on the teaching periodicals using the analysis form, if there were only a few articles, instructional ideas, and intergenerational program ideas in the teaching magazines, then perhaps the deficit in aging education content should be brought to the attention of the particular periodicals’ editorial boards by organizations such as the National Academy for Teaching and Learning about Aging (NATLA). Representatives of those organizations could then assist editorial boards in soliciting and reviewing any and all submitted articles and instructional ideas for appropriate curricular content and teaching methods. Also, of the aging education articles found, this study suggested some important areas and concepts that were ignored or not mentioned. This provides the popular teaching periodicals’ editorial boards specific themes and topics to seek from writers.

CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE

Sources of Teaching Ideas

No one information source is appropriate for every learning situation and purpose. Each source has its strengths and weaknesses and is appropriate for specific learning activities, purposes, and goals. Many teachers utilize a wide range of sources to help their students attain particular instructional goals. A lesson's objective(s) and the nature of the learning activity are the most pertinent criteria for deciding which source(s) to use for a specific lesson (Banks and Banks, 1999).

Teachers cannot facilitate learning activities in their classrooms without valid and varied sources of information. Some of the more formal sources appear to be state and local curricular mandates, teachers' guides of state adopted textbooks, institutes or workshops, and institutions of higher education. Some of the more informal supplementary sources of teachers' instructional ideas are most likely to come from: other teachers, children's informational trade books, professional or general teaching magazines, the media such as newspapers and television, audiovisual materials, the Internet, and their own individually developed ideas.

Little past or current empirical research has been conducted regarding the sources of teachers' lesson/activity ideas. According to a January, 1999 report compiled by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement, K-12

teachers have at their disposal a number of sources of information in integrating and better understanding reform strategies for the achievement of their students. Of the 21 listed sources, 5 were reported being used by at least 90 percent of the teachers: other teachers and in-service training (97 percent each); local school administrators (94 percent); institutes or workshops (92 percent); and local school districts (91 percent). Eleven other resources were reported being used by more than 50 percent of the teachers, which included professional journals, media such as newspapers and television, and institutions of higher education. Teachers also reported the method in which they prefer to receive information. Most teachers' reported first choice for receiving information was through workshops and summer institutes (56 percent), followed by hardcopy sources, such as journal articles and magazines (34 percent). Only 6 percent said they preferred electronic media (e.g., e-mail, Internet, electronic bulletin boards, micro cards).

In another study done by University of Chicago researchers (*Education Week, 1999*), it was concluded that what teachers read has a lot to do with what they teach. Data analysis was completed on the reading habits of 666 teachers from 52 schools across the nation. Approximately 50 percent of the teachers stated that they regularly read at least one professional journal. Most of the journal readers chose either professional publications that were directly related to the subject they taught or general education publications, which offered practical ideas they could use with their students in the classroom.

Teachers have multiple resources available to them as they begin to plan for instruction (e.g., other teachers, professional articles, past experiences). But published

curricular materials, especially textbooks currently being used, exert a major influence on their teaching (Clark and Elmore, 1979; Roth, Anderson, and Smith, 1983; Putman and Leinhardt, 1986).

The Internet is becoming a resource for teachers to use in locating learning ideas and activities for their students. Information that teachers need to make their curricula more relevant and timely is available through the Internet. Use of the Internet is especially important when budgets limit the purchase of materials and when rapidly changing events quickly make new books outdated (Banks and Banks, 1999).

Some of the more popular elementary school level teaching periodicals are available online. *Instructor*, *Schooldays*, and *The Mailbox Magazine*, have been online since 1997.

The Teaching Periodical as a Classroom Idea Source

As alluded to in the former section, teachers appear to be reading and using professional and general teaching publications to learn about educational reform and innovative practical teaching ideas. Circulation statistics of particular teaching periodicals, listed below, are another indication that teachers must be at least browsing or reading them for knowledge and/or teaching ideas.

The teaching periodical *Instructor* has a total circulation of 274,000 subscribers. *Schooldays*, has a total circulation of 161,000 subscribers. *The Mailbox Magazine* has 150,000 subscribers. *Teaching Pre K-8* magazine has a total circulation of 110,000. Teachers' memberships in specific subject or grade level area associations may receive, as part of their memberships, professional periodicals. Examples of these and their

membership/circulation figures are as follows: (1) The International Reading Association's *The Reading Teacher*—67,000; (2) National Council for the Social Studies' *Social Studies and the Young Learner*—8,000 paid subscriptions with an additional 5,000 promotional issues given at professional educational conferences and to some university elementary education methods classes; and (3) Association for Childhood Education International's *Childhood Education*—11,700.

If elementary teachers are reading magazines, as the former section indicates, and finding many of their informal curricular ideas for lessons to be used in the classroom, then the periodicals from which they are obtaining their ideas needed to be analyzed. Content addressing ideas, concepts, and classroom activities regarding teaching about aging had to be analyzed by noting how the content was presented and how it compared with NATLA's recommended aging-related content.

Aging Curricular Design and Instructional Materials

“Students need an informed, balanced view of aging. At early ages, children internalize ideas that can serve as breeding grounds for prejudices and fears of aging” (Couper and Pratt, 1997). According to a 1995 American Association of Retired Persons' study using 400 elementary students' drawings, young children were found to often hold positive attitudes of their own grandparents, but did not transfer their positive attitudes of grandparents to older people in general. Generalized images of aging among young people are typically negative. They tend to perceive growing older as a declining process, without potential for growth and fulfillment. The images of aging depicted in children's drawings featured disabilities, isolation, and dependency. Missing from the images is the

idea of physical and mental wellness in later life, independent living, involvement and interaction with others, productivity, and connection with the larger community (Couper and Pratt, 1997).

As mentioned in Chapter I, children learn about aging from myths and stereotypes transmitted from one generation to another through our language, humor, literature, and media. They also see negative images of aging in fairy tales, nursery rhymes, and cartoons such as an old witch, a forgetful old woman, and the sweet old man. When these descriptive and evaluative images repeatedly go unquestioned, ageist and gerontophobic (fear of aging) thinking is reinforced (Couper and Pratt, 1997).

Students miss out on learning that older people in our society do have significant roles if they see few older adults portrayed in classroom instructional materials. Many textbooks present aging not as a life-long process, but as an end-life stage next to death. Other less formal instructional resources may not present a balanced view of aging, but rely more on stereotypical images, such as gray-haired grandmothers baking cookies and grandfathers who are spending their time fishing (Couper and Pratt, 1997).

Learning about Aging

With studies showing how important visual images are in a student's learning about aging, it becomes the responsibility of elementary teachers to use multiple illustrations of aging, which constitute a balanced view of aging and older adults. Just as it is never too early to provide school experiences in art, language, science, mathematics, or sex education, so, too, is it never too early to introduce aging education (Ulin, 1982). Teachers and other adult role models, by their own words and actions, can show or

demonstrate that growing, learning, and changing are part of life at all ages (Couper and Pratt, 1997). “Children learn more from what you emanate than from what you say” (Whitfield, 1996). “Behavior is learned by children during every waking moment. To the extent that we are observed in action by children, we are all teachers. We become their models and what they watch forms the memories from which their actions are drawn. Role modeling is the most powerful form of teaching, even as it was when Aristotle crystallized the idea for his students in ancient Greece by stating that the soul never thinks without a picture” (Brennan, 1998). Teachers can inform their students how they think and learn about aging by modeling their reading of informative books on aging and telling the students positive stories about relationships with grandparents, uncles, aunts, and other older adults in the community.

Since learning about aging involves the learning of particular concepts, elementary educators need to expose their students to as many examples as possible. In the learning of concepts, the teacher must not only present visual-type examples but multiple concrete examples as well. The acquisition of conceptual knowledge was extensively studied in the concept-learning (sometimes called *concept-attainment* or *concept-formation*) experimental literature. “Concepts come into existence through repeated exposure to examples that are similar in some respects and dissimilar in others. When one acquires a concept, one has, in effect, learned to extract commonalities” (Farnham-Diggory, 1994). In a longitudinal study conducted by Herbert J. Klausmeier from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, concept learning was found to be most rapid from Grade 1 through Grade 3. From Grade 4 through Grade 6 the rate of gain

decelerated, and the rate of gain was quite uniform for all the mental processes. The grade in which students mastered the same level of different concepts varied tremendously according to the examples and the situations in which they were experienced. A major finding was that the students' learning depended heavily on focused and thorough instruction. To assist with initial learning of a concept and its defining attributes, affirmative feedback must be provided. Also, providing corrective feedback is important in preventing the formation of misconception (Klausmeier, 1992). Ulin (1982) believes that young people are enabled to give up stereotypes about age and older adults by learning to view the world as a global village, developing the concept of interdependence not only of cultures and countries but also of generations. At each successive school level, students are ready to acquire more sophisticated concepts and to learn from different experiences (Ulin, 1982).

Today, more and more teachers are making field studies part of their students' experience. By venturing into the community, the teachers and students are "reaping the benefits of authentic learning" (Willis, 1997). Clifford Knapp of North Illinois University and author of *Just Beyond the Classroom: Community Adventures for Interdisciplinary Learning* is a strong advocate of "outdoor education" which he defines as "moving outside the four walls of the classroom to meet educational objectives in a place that makes more sense for learning" (Willis, 1997). Field studies provide students with "a taste of the real world," states Dawn Thomas, coordinator of elementary social studies in Montgomery County (Willis, 1997). According to Holly Ivel, program associate at the National Society for Experiential Education in Raleigh, N.C., students are generating

knowledge in many ways, during field studies, by asking questions, interviewing people, and solving problems as a group (Willis, 1997). Young students' structured visits to community senior centers, where active older adults gather, might act as a part of the "outdoor education" Willis talks about.

In selected classrooms of a public school district an interdisciplinary resource unit on aging for the primary grades was piloted during the years 1996-1997. Before the unit it was found that many of the students held misconceptions of aging and older adults. Intergenerational activities included in the unit were: inquiry-oriented research conducted with familiar and unfamiliar older adults, the study of narrative history to provide students with inspiring older adult role models (including the reading of children's literature based on real-life stories of active older adults from other times and places), and finally a field trip to the local community's senior center where students met the people with whom they had earlier exchanged questionnaire information. Based on pre-and post-tests of their knowledge of aging concepts and attitudes toward aging, the young students benefited positively from their participation in the unit's activities. By providing for intergenerational involvement in the curriculum (a kind of active older adult modeling), followed by teacher-led discussions focusing attention on pertinent concepts, the real-world connection could be made salient to the learners. The young students learned more about aging and altered some former ageist attitudes as they interacted with older adults, both familiar and unfamiliar, in a variety of activities (Laney, Laney, Wimsatt, and Moseley, 1997). Couper, Sheehan, and Thomas (1991) also point out that several studies have shown that direct experience with older adults in controlled settings appears to be

more effective in changing children's attitudes than providing them with information about aging (Chamberlain, Fetterman, and Maher, 1994).

A question that needs to be addressed is the degree to which aging education should aim to achieve cognitive or affective ends. This is not an easy question, but some of the difficulty lies in the artificial dichotomy that teachers often draw between the two modes. How can one predict when the acquisition of information will remain a purely intellectual matter and when it will produce fallout in the form of feelings, attitudes, and consequent behavior? Schools and communities vary widely in the degree to which they feel schools should stress intellectual as opposed to attitudinal ends, and their relative commitment to one or the other will be reflected in any program they initiate (Ulin, 1982).

When school programs stress the acquisition of information and the processing of it, students acquire a body of data and learn to make meaning of it. In studying aging, they inquire into the reasons humans age, how they have aged in the past and are likely to age in the future, how people now react to and prepare for their own aging, how they respond to the aging of those close to them as well as those distant from them, what experiences determine these responses, and how people in different places see aging and later life. If a teacher chooses a cognitively oriented approach, questions of value will be dealt with only when they arise, and then only incidentally and peripherally. A teacher does not implant "right attitudes." In this type of approach there is little "experiential learning" and few efforts to create a mind-set, to alter attitudes, or to change behavior. Students are unlikely to spend class time in role-play, simulations, or intergenerational

activities (Ulin, 1982). Many elementary teachers who might feel that they would have to choose the cognitively oriented approach to presenting aging concepts into the classroom would definitely need to present a balanced view of aging images. This could be done through the use of non-ageist picture books and tradebooks that have more realistic and descriptive images of older adults.

On the other hand, if the aging education objectives of a teacher are affective with attitudinal and behavioral changes being emphasized along with, or more than, informational gain and cognitive skills, then the teacher may use more experiential activities. Students may acquire knowledge about how and why people age and react to aging, but the knowledge serves more as a means rather than an end, to influence the way students feel about and then act in matters of their own and others' aging. This type of approach usually postulates particular values as "humane" and certain attitudes as "right," and deliberately fosters their acquisition. These may include an "acceptance of aging," "respect for age," and the "responsibility of youth toward age." Some teachers may take a "value-free" stance, confident that "humane" values and "right" attitudes will prevail. The odds are, however, that despite the best of intent, the teachers' values will show in their approach as well as in their selection of materials and learning experiences. Aging education activities that focus on an impact on students' values and behavior are likely to feature experiential learning, to include role playing and simulation in class, and to stress face-to-face intergenerational activities with older adults (e.g., to have students visit community senior or retirement centers, take oral histories, and have older adults come into the classroom), (Ulin, 1982).

What are aging educators actually doing in their classrooms in terms of aging education? Do they plan instruction, or is aging an incidental topic that may or may not be addressed? For more than 30 years, researchers and professionals have called for inclusion of aging content at various levels of public school instruction and have stressed the importance of aging education for young children. In a 1992 study (Moseman), 305 intermediate-level teachers in Nebraska were asked to indicate the frequency with which they used different aging education practices in their classrooms, using a five-point Likert scale. The three education practices most frequently employed were (1) presentation of aging as a natural part of the lifecycle, (2) planning intergenerational activities, and (3) explanation of death as a natural part of the life cycle. The aging education practice least frequently reported was “I provide planned instruction about aging.” Only 40 percent of respondents “always” or “frequently” addressed topics related to aging when they arose spontaneously in the classroom. Although most teachers reported using one or two aging education practices, most did not consistently use a variety of practices. In conclusion, planned instruction about aging in schools appears to be no more prevalent than it was over a decade ago. Possible reasons why teachers do not plan specific activities on aging topics include shortage of suitable instructional materials, lack of teacher preparedness, and negative attitudes toward their own aging (Age Share Research Brief, 1996).

The aging population can provide many opportunities for educators to teach their students about growing and being old. This will require not only formal curricular teaching resources, such as textbooks, to include knowledge and activities for classroom use, but informal sources, such as teaching magazines or the Internet, as well.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Part I Sample

The sample in the portion of the study dealing with teachers' idea sources consisted of 90 elementary school teachers who taught kindergarten through sixth grade in a public school district. The school district was located in a suburb of a large North Central Texas city.

Part I Instrumentation

A researcher-designed written questionnaire or survey entitled "Where do Elementary Teachers find their Teaching Ideas?" (see Appendix A), was administered in this part of the study. The cross-sectional survey elicited information from the elementary educators with regard to classroom teaching idea sources. The first section of the survey instrument consisted of fourteen Likert-like behavioral items based on a five-point scale from "always" to "never." These completed statements informed the researcher of how often the elementary teachers obtained their teaching ideas from particular sources. The second section of the instrument consisted of a behavioral checklist naming twelve different teaching periodicals, which the teachers marked if they had browsed or used ideas from in the past year. Following the checklist, if teachers had browsed or used ideas from "other" teaching periodicals in the past year they were asked to name them. The final item in section two asked the teachers to list the three periodicals, from the twelve

listed, which they read most often. Finally, the last section of the survey requested general demographic information from the teachers such as gender, age range, highest level of education, number of years' teaching experience, current grade levels at which they were teaching, and current subjects being taught or current teaching assignments.

Part II Sample

In addition to acquiring information from the survey instrument, four of the popular commercial press teaching periodicals and three of the professional teaching journals were analyzed for the number and types of articles, ideas, and activities about aging in the issues dated 1989-1999.

Part II Instrumentation

A periodical analysis form (see Appendix B) was used to record data pertaining to any teaching periodical's content on aging education. If a teaching magazine contained any article(s) with aging-related content, the following factors were identified: the issue's publication date, the page length of the article, the title of the applicable article, the author of the article, the author's experience with aging education (if any), the article's target audience, and the purpose(s) or main message(s) of the article. The purpose(s) of the article were then categorized, using a rubric format, as one or more of the following: "informational," "suggests specific teaching or learning strategies and methods," "describes intergenerational program or activities," and any other categories, which emerged during the analysis.

Part I Data Analyses

Descriptive research, in the form of a survey, was conducted to analyze and

identify sources elementary teachers used to locate teaching ideas for their particular classrooms or grade levels, identify which teaching periodicals they had browsed or used ideas from in the past year, and provided general demographic data about the elementary educators. Response frequencies within each survey section were tallied.

Part II Data Analyses

Descriptive research, using a content analysis instrument, was conducted to record data pertaining to any teaching periodical's content on aging education. The data/content found and recorded was compared to, and discussed with regard to NATLA's recommended aging-related content that should be taught.

CHAPTER 1V

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Where do elementary teachers find their teaching ideas and specifically, how much do elementary teachers rely on teaching periodical articles and/or magazine articles for their teaching ideas? For the purpose of answering the study's first two research questions, stated above, a researcher-designed written cross-sectional survey was administered to 90 elementary school teachers who taught kindergarten through sixth grade in a public school district. Specific demographic information was obtained from the survey as well.

In addition to acquiring information from the survey instrument, four of the popular commercial press teaching periodicals and three of the professional teaching journals were analyzed for the number and types of articles, ideas, and activities about aging in the issues dated 1989-1999. The analyses answered the following study's final two research questions: 1) If teaching periodicals frequently browsed or read by elementary teachers contain articles addressing ideas, concepts, and classroom activities regarding teaching about aging, how is the content presented? and 2) If teaching periodicals frequently browsed or read by elementary teachers contain articles addressing content regarding teaching about aging, how does the content compare with the aging-related content recommended by The National Academy for Teaching and Learning about Aging (NATLA)?

Part I Data Analyses

Demographic data obtained from the written survey were as follows. The data were divided into two groups of 39 primary teachers of grades K-2 and 51 intermediate teachers of grades 3-6.

Of the 39 primary teachers, two were male, whereas 37 were female. Regarding age, 38 reported their age ranges and one did not. Two or 5.3% ranged from 21-24 years old; eight or 21.1% ranged from 25-30 years old; fifteen or 39.5% ranged from 31-40 years old; eleven or 28.9% ranged from 41-50 years old; two or 5.3% ranged from 51-60 years old; and none were older than 60. When asked to report the highest degree earned, 38 teachers responded and one did not. Of those 38 primary teachers, 31 or 81.6% had earned a Bachelor's Degree, seven or 18.4% had earned a Master's Degree, and none had earned a Doctor's Degree. With regard to number of years of teaching experience among the 39 primary teachers, the modal value was 6-8 years experience. (See Table 1).

Table 1

Teaching Experience of Primary Grades K-2 Teachers (N=39)

Years' Experience	Frequency
0-2	4
3-5	7
6-8	11
9-11	2
12-14	8
15-17	0
18-20	4
21-23	2
24-26	0
27-29	0
30+	1

Of the 51 intermediate teachers, two were males, and 49 were females. Eight teachers or 15.7% ranged in age from 21-24 years. Eight or 15.7% ranged in age from 25-30 years. Eleven or 21.6% ranged in age from 31-40 years. Seventeen of the 51 teachers or 33.3% ranged in age from 41-50 years. Six or 11.8% ranged in age from 51-60 years, and only one or 2.0% of the intermediate teachers was over 60 years of age. With regard to the highest degree earned by the intermediate teachers, 50 responded and one did not. Thirty-eight or 79.2% reported earning a Bachelor's Degree, nine or 18.8% had earned a Master's Degree, and one or 2.1% had earned a Doctor's Degree. With regard to number of years of teaching experience among the 51 intermediate teachers, the modal value was 5-8 years experience. (See Table 2).

Table 2

Teaching Experience of Intermediate Grades 3-6 Teachers (N=51)

Years' Experience	Frequency
0	3
1-4	12
5-8	17
9-12	7
13-16	2
17-20	6
21-24	3
25-28	1
29+	1

Data identifying the sources used by the elementary teachers to locate teaching ideas for their particular classrooms or grade levels were gathered through the survey instrument that consisted of fourteen Likert-like behavioral items or statements based on a five-point scale from “always” to “never.” Tables report tallied response choices from

the two groups of teachers.

The responses on the survey of the 39 primary teachers, of grades K-2, are reported in Table 3.

Table 3

Primary Teacher Grades K-2 Responses (N=39)

SURVEY STATEMENTS		Response Choices				
		Always	Frequently	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
1	I obtain teaching ideas from the state and local curricular mandates.	0 0.0%	4 10.3%	20 51.3%	9 23.1%	6 15.4%
2	I obtain teaching ideas from suggestions provided in the teacher's guide of textbooks.	0 0.0%	7 17.9%	16 41.0%	11 28.2%	5 12.8%
3	I obtain teaching ideas from my textbooks' supplementary materials (e.g., audiotapes, videotapes).	0 0.0%	7 17.9%	13 33.3%	16 41.0%	3 7.7%
4	I obtain teaching ideas from institutes or workshops.	10 25.6%	22 56.4%	6 15.4%	1 2.6%	0 0.0%
5	I obtain teaching ideas from university coursework.	2 5.1%	6 15.4%	8 20.5%	11 28.2%	12 30.8%
6	I obtain teaching ideas from other teachers.	20 51.3%	18 46.2%	1 2.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%
7	I obtain teaching ideas from children's informational trade books.	11 28.2%	10 25.6%	12 30.8%	1 2.6%	5 12.8%
8	I obtain teaching ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines found in my school's media center/library.	6 15.4%	12 30.8%	12 30.8%	8 20.5%	1 2.6%
9	I obtain teaching ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines to which I subscribe.	10 25.6%	12 30.8%	5 12.8%	6 15.4%	6 15.4%
10	I obtain teaching ideas from	7	10	15	4	3

	other teachers' periodicals or magazines.	17.9%	25.6%	38.5%	10.3%	7.7%
11	I obtain teaching ideas from the media (e.g., newspapers, television).	1	0	11	20	7
		2.6%	0.0%	28.2%	51.3%	17.9%
12	I obtain teaching ideas from the Internet.	0	7	16	11	5
		0.0%	17.9%	41.0%	28.2%	12.8%
13	I use teaching ideas, which I develop or have developed myself.	3	21	13	0	2
		7.7%	53.8%	33.3%	0.0%	5.1%
14	I obtain teaching ideas from <u>other</u> sources.	3	10	13	8	5
		7.7%	25.6%	33.3%	20.5%	12.8%

Table 3, above, reports the following primary teachers' responses with regard to each survey item/statement. Item one stated, "I obtain teaching ideas from the state and local curricular mandates." No teacher responded, "Always." Four or 10.3% responded, "Frequently." Twenty or 51.3% responded, "Occasionally." Nine or 23.1% responded, "Seldom" and six or 15.4% reported, "Never" obtaining teaching ideas from the state and local curricular mandates.

Item two stated, "I obtain teaching ideas from suggestions provided in the teacher's guide of textbooks." As with the first item, no teacher responded, "Always." Seven or 17.9 % responded, "Frequently." Sixteen or 41.0% responded, "Occasionally." Eleven or 28.2% responded, "Seldom" and five or 12.8% responded, "Never" to obtaining teaching ideas suggested by the teacher's guides of textbooks.

Item three stated, "I obtain teaching ideas from my textbooks' supplementary materials (e.g., audiotapes, videotapes)." A third time, no teacher reported, "Always." Seven or 17.9% responded, "Frequently." Thirteen or 33.3% responded, "Occasionally."

Sixteen or 41.0% responded, “Seldom” and three or 7.7% reported, “Never” to finding teaching ideas in textbooks’ supplementary materials.

Item four stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from institutes or workshops.” Ten or 25.6% of the primary teachers responded, “Always.” Twenty-two or 56.4% responded, “Frequently.” Six or 15.4% responded, “Occasionally.” One or 2.6% reported, “Seldom” and no teacher responded as “Never” obtaining teaching ideas from institutes or workshops.

Item five stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from university coursework.” Twenty or 51.3% responded, “Always.” Six or 15.4% responded, “Frequently.” Eight or 20.5% responded, “Occasionally.” Eleven or 28.2% reported, “Seldom” and twelve or 30.8% responded, “Never” obtaining teaching ideas from university coursework.

Item six stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from other teachers.” Twenty or 51.3% responded, “Always.” Eighteen or 46.2% responded, “Frequently.” One teacher or 2.6% responded, “Occasionally.” No primary teachers reported, “Seldom” or “Never” to obtaining ideas from other teachers.

Item seven stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from children’s informational trade books.” Eleven or 28.2% responded, “Always.” Ten or 25.6% responded, “Frequently.” Twelve or 30.8% responded, “Occasionally.” One or 2.6% of the teachers reported, “Seldom” and five or 12.8% responded, “Never” to obtaining ideas from children’s trade books.

Item eight stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines found in my school’s media center/library.” Six or 15.4% responded, “Always.” Twelve

or 30.8% responded, “Frequently.” Twelve or 30.8% responded, “Occasionally.” Eight or 20.5% reported, “Seldom” and one or 2.6% responded, “Never” to obtaining ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines found in their school’s media center.

Item nine stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines to which I subscribe.” Ten or 25.6% responded, “Always.” Twelve or 30.0% responded, “Frequently.” Five or 12.8% responded, “Occasionally.” Six or 15.4% reported, “Seldom” just as six or 15.4% responded, “Never” to obtaining ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines to which they subscribed.

Item ten stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from other teachers’ periodicals or magazines.” To this statement, seven or 17.9% responded, “Always.” Ten or 25.6% of the primary teachers responded, “Frequently.” Fifteen or 38.5% responded, “Occasionally.” Four or 10.3% reported, “Seldom” and three or 7.7% responded as “Never” obtaining ideas from other teachers’ periodicals or magazines.

Item eleven stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from the media (e.g., newspapers, television).” One or 2.6% responded, “Always.” No teacher chose “Frequently” as a response. Eleven or 28.2% responded, “Occasionally.” Twenty or 51.3% reported, “Seldom” and seven or 17.9% responded, “Never” to obtaining ideas from the media.

Item twelve stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from the Internet.” None of the 39 primary teachers responded, “Always.” Seven or 17.9% responded, “Frequently.” Sixteen or 41.0% responded, “Occasionally.” Eleven or 28.2% reported, “Seldom” and five or 12.8% responded, “Never” using the Internet to obtain teaching ideas.

Item thirteen stated, “I use teaching ideas which I develop or have developed myself.” Three or 7.7% responded, “Always.” Twenty-one or 53.8% responded, “Frequently.” Thirteen or 33.3% responded, “Occasionally.” No one reported, “Seldom” and only two or 5.2% of the primary teachers responded as “Never” using ideas they develop or have developed themselves.

Item fourteen, the last item of the survey’s first section, stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from other sources.” Three or 7.7% responded, “Always.” Ten or 25.6% responded, “Frequently.” Thirteen or 33.3% responded, “Occasionally.” Eight or 20.5% reported, “Seldom” and five or 12.8% responded, “Never” to obtaining teaching ideas from sources other than the ones already stated on the survey.

The second part of the survey’s last item asked the elementary teachers to “name the other sources” if they responded that they obtained teaching ideas from “other” sources. The following is a list of the grades K-2 primary teachers’ written responses: other schools; retired teachers; parents; teacher stores; teacher friends; *Family Circle*; school principal; school librarian; church workers; friends in other industries; and teachers’ clubs.

The next section of the survey asked the elementary teachers to √ each of the 12 items/statements, which were applicable to their behaviors in the past year. Each item stated that they had “browsed or used ideas from” a particular teaching periodical or magazine “in the past year.” As seen in Appendix A, the 12 teaching periodicals or magazines listed were: *Instructor*; *Teaching Pre K-8*; *Schooldays*; *Phi Delta*; *The Mailbox Magazine*; *Childhood Education*; *The Computing Teacher*; *Classroom Connect*;

The Reading Teacher; *Social Studies*; *Social Studies and the Young Learner*; and *Social Education*.

Then, from the 12 periodical and magazine titles given, the teachers were asked to list the three, which they used, browsed, or read most often. For the 39 primary teachers, the top three periodicals that were most often used, browsed, or read were: *The Mailbox Magazine* (named 29 times); *Schooldays* (named six times); and *Teaching Pre K-8* and *Instructor* (both named five times each).

The responses, on the survey's first section, from the 51 intermediate teachers, of grades 3-6, are reported in Table 4.

Table 4

Intermediate Teacher Grades 3-6 Responses (N=51)

Survey Statements		Response Choices				
		Always	Frequently	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
1	I obtain teaching ideas from the state and local curricular mandates.	3 5.9%	10 19.6%	14 27.5%	15 29.4%	9 17.6%
2	I obtain teaching ideas from suggestions provided in the teacher's guide of textbooks.	0 0.0%	17 33.3%	27 52.9%	5 9.8%	2 3.9%
3	I obtain teaching ideas from my textbooks' supplementary materials (e.g., audiotapes, videotapes).	0 0.0%	16 31.4%	27 52.9%	5 9.8%	3 5.9%
4	I obtain teaching ideas from institutes or workshops.	1 2.0%	32 62.7%	14 27.5%	4 7.8%	0 0.0%
5	I obtain teaching ideas from university coursework.	0 0.0%	8 15.7%	17 33.3%	21 41.2%	5 9.8%
6	I obtain teaching ideas from other teachers.	15 29.4%	27 52.9%	9 17.6%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%

Survey Statements		Response Choices				
		Always	Frequently	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
7	I obtain teaching ideas from children's informational trade books.	5	11	24	7	4
		9.8%	21.6%	47.1%	13.7%	7.8%
8	I obtain teaching periodicals or magazines found in my school's media center/library.	2	11	18	14	6
		3.9%	21.6%	35.3%	27.5%	11.8%
9	I obtain teaching ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines to which I subscribe.	6	14	12	17	2
		11.8%	27.5%	23.5%	33.3%	3.9%
10	I obtain teaching ideas from other teachers' periodicals or magazines.	3	4	21	17	6
		5.9%	7.8%	41.2%	33.3%	11.8%
11	I obtain teaching ideas from the media (e.g., newspapers, television).	0	7	17	21	6
		0.0%	13.7%	33.3%	41.2%	11.8%
12	I obtain teaching ideas from the Internet.	2	5	17	17	10
		3.9%	9.8%	33.3%	33.3%	19.6%
13	I use teaching ideas, which I develop or have developed myself.	2	33	15	1	0
		3.9%	64.7%	29.4%	2.0%	0.0%
14	I obtain teaching ideas from <u>other</u> sources.	1	14	19	10	7
		2.0%	27.5%	37.3%	19.6%	13.7%

Table 4, above, reports the following intermediate teachers' responses with regard to each survey item/statement. Item one stated, "I obtain teaching ideas from the state and local curricular mandates." Three or 5.9% teachers responded, "Always." Ten or 19.6% responded, "Frequently." Fourteen or 27.5% responded, "Occasionally." Fifteen or 29.4% responded, "Seldom" and nine or 17.6% reported, "Never" obtaining teaching ideas from the state and local curricular mandates.

Item two stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from suggestions provided in the teacher’s guide of textbooks.” No teacher responded, “Always.” Seventeen or 33.3% responded, “Frequently.” Twenty-seven or 52.9% responded, “Occasionally.” Five or 9.8% responded, “Seldom” and two or 3.9% responded, “Never” to obtaining teaching ideas suggested by the teacher’s guides of textbooks.

Item three stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from my textbooks’ supplementary materials (e.g., audiotapes, videotapes).” As in item two, no teacher reported, “Always.” Sixteen or 31.4% responded, “Frequently.” Twenty-seven or 52.9% responded, “Occasionally.” Five or 9.8% responded, “Seldom” and three or 5.9% reported, “Never” to finding teaching ideas in textbooks’ supplementary materials.

Item four stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from institutes or workshops.” Only one or 2.0% of the intermediate teachers responded, “Always.” Thirty-two or 62.7% responded, “Frequently.” Fourteen or 27.5% responded, “Occasionally.” Four or 7.8% reported, “Seldom” and no teacher responded as “Never” obtaining teaching ideas from institutes or workshops.

Item five stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from university coursework.” No one responded, “Always.” Eight or 15.7% responded, “Frequently.” Seventeen or 33.3% responded, “Occasionally.” Twenty-one or 41.2% reported, “Seldom” and five or 9.8% responded, “Never” obtaining teaching ideas from university coursework.

Item six stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from other teachers.” Fifteen or 29.4% responded, “Always.” Twenty-seven or 52.9% responded, “Frequently.” Nine or 17.6% responded, “Occasionally.” No intermediate teachers reported, “Seldom” or “Never” to

obtaining ideas from other teachers.

Item seven stated, "I obtain teaching ideas from children's informational trade books." Five or 9.8% responded, "Always." Eleven or 21.6% responded, "Frequently." Twenty-four or 47.1% responded, "Occasionally." Seven or 13.7% of the teachers reported, "Seldom" and four or 7.8% responded, "Never" to obtaining ideas from children's trade books.

Item eight stated, "I obtain teaching ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines found in my school's media center/library." Two or 3.94% responded, "Always." Eleven or 21.6% responded, "Frequently." Eighteen or 35.3% responded, "Occasionally." Fourteen or 27.5% reported, "Seldom" and six or 11.8% responded, "Never" to obtaining ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines found in their school's media center/library.

Item nine stated, "I obtain teaching ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines to which I subscribe." Six or 11.8% responded, "Always." Fourteen or 27.5% responded, "Frequently." Twelve or 23.5% responded, "Occasionally." Seventeen or 33.3% reported, "Seldom" with two or 3.9% responding, "Never" to obtaining ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines to which they subscribed.

Item ten stated, "I obtain teaching ideas from other teachers' periodicals or magazines." To this statement, three or 5.9% responded, "Always." Four or 7.8% of the intermediate teachers responded, "Frequently." Twenty-one or 41.2% responded, "Occasionally." Seventeen or 33.3% reported, "Seldom" and six or 11.8% responded as "Never" obtaining ideas from other teachers' periodicals or magazines.

Item eleven stated, "I obtain teaching ideas from the media (e.g., newspapers,

television).” No teacher responded “Always.” Seven or 13.7% of the teachers chose “Frequently” as a response. Seventeen or 33.3% responded, “Occasionally.” Twenty-one or 41.2% reported, “Seldom” and six or 11.8% responded, “Never” to obtaining ideas from the media.

Item twelve stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from the Internet.” Two or 3.9% of the 51 intermediate teachers responded, “Always.” Five or 9.8% responded, “Frequently.” Seventeen or 33.3% reported, “Occasionally” just as seventeen or 33.3% responded “Seldom.” Ten or 19.6% responded, “Never” using the Internet to obtain teaching ideas.

Item thirteen stated, “I use teaching ideas which I develop or have developed myself.” Two or 3.9% responded, “Always.” Thirty-three or 64.7% responded, “Frequently.” Fifteen or 29.4% responded, “Occasionally.” Only one or 2.0% reported, “Seldom” and none of the intermediate teachers responded as “Never” using ideas they develop or have developed themselves.

Item fourteen, the last item of the survey’s first section, stated, “I obtain teaching ideas from “other” sources.” One or 2.0% responded, “Always.” Fourteen or 27.5% responded, “Frequently.” Nineteen or 37.3% responded, “Occasionally.” Ten or 19.6% reported, “Seldom” and seven or 13.7% responded, “Never” to obtaining teaching ideas from sources other than the ones already stated on the survey.

The second part of the survey’s last item asked the intermediate teachers to “name the other sources” if they responded that they obtained teaching ideas from “other” sources. The intermediate teachers of grades 3-6 responded as follows: current events;

teacher stores; books; local schools' observation; friends; state fair materials; Sunday School; children; students; spouse; scout manual; and past experiences.

The next section of the survey asked the intermediate teachers to √ each of the 12 items/statements, which were applicable to their behaviors in the past year. Each item stated that they had “browsed or used ideas from” a particular teaching periodical or magazine “in the past year.” As seen in Appendix A, the 12 teaching periodicals or magazines listed were: *Instructor*; *Teaching Pre K-8*; *Schooldays*; *Phi Delta Kappan*; *The Mailbox Magazine*; *Childhood Education*; *The Computing Teacher*; *Classroom Connect*; *The Reading Teacher*; *Social Studies*; *Social Studies and the Young Learner*; and *Social Education*. The three highest ranking teaching periodicals or magazines most often used, browsed, or read by the 51 intermediate teachers were: *The Mailbox Magazine* (named 33 times); *Instructor* (named 17 times); and *Schooldays* (named five times).

Part II Data Analyses

In Part II of the study seven of the most popular periodicals published for elementary school teachers, based upon highest circulation figures, were analyzed for the number and types of articles, ideas, and activities about aging in the issues dated 1989-1999. In addition to the analyses of issues' articles with regard to the following categories: “informational,” “suggests specific teaching or learning strategies and methods,” “describes intergenerational program or activities,” two other categories emerged frequently. The categories that were evident in all the periodicals' issues were “book review titles mentioning older adult characters” and “book reviews with selected

learning activities”. Because of the emergence of these categories, they were added to the analyses of all seven periodicals’ issues. During the analyses, it was also noted that the two categories, “informational” and “suggests specific teaching or learning strategies and methods” really emerged as one category rather than two separate ones. Therefore, when the analyses’ results are described, these two former categories will be combined as one. The two categories that were combined into one will be specified as “informational with selected teaching or learning activities”.

The tables, which follow, depict the results of content analysis conducted on each of the four most popular teaching periodicals and three professional educators’ journals published for elementary school teachers.

In this study, Volumes 99-108 for a total of 80 issues of *Instructor* were analyzed for aging education content. At the time of the study, the periodical was published eight times each year with a circulation of 274,000. In order for total volumes of the periodical to be examined, four of *Instructor*’s 1990 issues were analyzed along with the subsequent 1989-1999 issues.

Table 5

Instructor

Year	Informational with selected teaching or learning activities	Describes intergenerational programs or activities	Book reviews with selected learning activities	Book review titles mentioning older adult characters
1989/90	4	2	0	6
91	2	6	6	11
92	0	2	5	4
93	3	1	8	14
94	5	8	8	2

95	2	1	4	12
96	0	1	1	4
97	0	0	1	2
98	0	0	2	1
99	0	0	0	0
Totals	16	21	35	56

In the 1989/1990 *Instructor* issues there were four articles considered as “informational with selected teaching or learning activities”. Two informational articles were found in each of the 1991 and 1995 years’ volumes. The 1992 issues contained no articles that were informational in nature, with the issues of 1993 having three. Of the 80 issues examined, the 1994 issues contained the most numerous informational articles with a total of five. Four years in a row, the issues of 1996-1999 contained no articles that were informational with selected learning and teaching activities. In total, there were sixteen of these articles.

Instructor’s 1989/1990 issues contained two articles that were analyzed as describing intergenerational programs or activities. In the 1991 issues, the number of these types of articles increased to six. As in the 1989/90 issues, there were two articles found in the 1992 issues that were intergenerational in nature with regard to programs or learning activities. The 1993, 1995, and 1996 dated volumes contained only one article each discussing intergenerational activities or programs. As with articles described as “informational with selected learning and teaching activities,” the category of articles describing intergenerational programs and learning activities increased significantly to eight in number in the 1994 issues of *Instructor*. Also, in the 1997, 1998, and 1999 issues, no intergenerational articles were found. Final count of articles that described

intergenerational programs or activities was twenty-one.

In the 1989/1990 and 1999 issues of *Instructor* there were no reviews of books that contained learning activities based on aging characters and/or aging information. The 1991 issues had six book reviews containing suggested learning activities. In the 1992 issues, five book reviews with selected learning activities were found. In both the 1993 and 1994 dated volumes, there were eight book reviews each, the highest number found of this type, with learning activities. Four book reviews with selected learning activities were found in the 1995 issues. The 1996 and 1997 dated volumes contained one reviewed book each accompanied by learning activities. Two book reviews with selected learning activities were found and analyzed in the 1998 issues. When totaled, thirty-five book reviews with selected learning activities were analyzed in *Instructor*.

In the fourth and final category, “book review titles mentioning older adult characters”, the quantity was much higher than in any other category. The 1989/1990 issues contained six such book review titles. In the 1991 issues, the amount increased to eleven in number. In the 1992 and 1996 dated volumes, four book review titles each were found. The highest number of book review titles mentioning older adult characters was analyzed in the 1993 issues being fourteen. In 1994 and 1997, the magazine’s volumes contained 2 each of the older adult book review titles. In addition to the 1993 issues’ large number of this category, 1995 issues contained twelve book review titles of this type. The 1998 and 1999 issues had the lowest figures with regard to this category with the 1998 issues only having one book review title, and 1999 issues having none at all. Of the four categories in which the data were analyzed, this category’s total was the greatest

with a final quantity of fifty-six book review titles mentioning older adult characters.

In this study, Volumes 10-18, for a total of 60 issues, of *Schooldays* were analyzed for aging education content. At the time of the study, the periodical was published bi-monthly or 6 times each year with a circulation of 161,000. *Schooldays* is quoted as being “The Magazine for Today’s Primary Teacher.”

Table 6

Schooldays

Year	Informational with selected teaching or learning activities	Describes intergenerational programs or activities	Book reviews with selected learning activities	Book review titles mentioning older adult characters
1990	0	0	0	0
91	0	1	0	0
92	0	0	0	0
93	0	0	0	0
94	0	1	0	1
95	0	1	0	0
96	0	1	3	2
97	1	2	4	0
98	0	1	0	0
99	0	0	0	0
Totals	1	7	7	3

As seen in the table, only one year of *Schooldays*’ issues contained an informational article with selected teaching or learning activities and that was 1997. In issues from 1990-1996 and 1998-1999 none of these types of articles were found. Therefore, the total number of aging education articles containing information and teaching or learning activities in *Schooldays*’ 60 issues is one.

With regard to articles describing intergenerational programs or activities,

Schooldays' volumes dated 1990, 1992-1993, and 1999 had none. The volumes of years 1991, 1994-1996, and 1998 contained only one article each of any intergenerational content. Finally, in the 1997 issue two articles were found. These articles totaled seven in describing intergenerational programs or activities.

As in the last category mentioned, there were a total of seven when examining the 60 issues of *Schooldays* for book reviews with selected learning activities. The magazines' issues from 1990-1995 and 1998-1999 contained none. Only the 1996 issue had three of these book reviews, and the 1997 issue listed 4 book reviews with selected learning activities related to aging.

Book review titles mentioning older adult characters were few in *Schooldays*' 60 analyzed issues. From 1990-1993, and in 1995 as well as 1997-1999 issues no book review titles mentioned older adult characters. The total number of *Schooldays*' book review titles mentioning older adult characters was only three.

In this study, Volumes 12-21, for a total of 120 issues, 60 issues of *Mailbox* (Primary) and 60 issues of *Mailbox* (Intermediate) were analyzed for aging education content. At the time of the study, the periodical was published bi-monthly or 6 times each year with a circulation of 150,000. *Mailbox* is quoted as being "The Idea Magazine for Elementary Teachers (K-6)."

The primary issues of *Mailbox* were initially examined and analyzed for aging related content. (See Table 7A).

Table 7A

Mailbox (Primary Edition)

Year	Informational with selected teaching or learning activities	Describes intergenerational programs or activities	Book reviews with selected learning activities	Book review titles mentioning older adult characters
1990	3	2	5	0
91	1	0	1	1
92	3	3	7	0
93	3	1	2	3
94	9	2	10	13
95	6	2	6	4
96	7	1	6	13
97	17	8	13	13
98	4	2	3	14
99	2	1	2	1
Totals	55	22	55	62

With regard to informational articles with selected aging related teaching or learning activities, three were found in the 1990 and 1992-1993 *Mailbox* primary issues of each year. In the 1991 issues, only one article of this nature was analyzed. There were nine articles of this category in the 1994 issues. In the 1995 issues, there were six and subsequently seven of these types of articles in the 1996 issues. The issues of 1997 possessed the greatest number of informational articles with selected teaching or learning activities being seventeen. In the 1998 and 1999 issues, the quantities of these articles with activities decreased significantly down to four and two respectively. The final total of informational articles with suggested teaching or learning activities, in the 60 analyzed primary issues of *Mailbox*, was fifty-five.

The 1990, 1994-1995, and 1998 primary edition issues of *Mailbox* contained two

articles each that were analyzed as describing intergenerational programs or activities. In the 1991 issues, none of these types of articles were present. In the 1992 issues, there were three articles that were intergenerational in nature with regard to programs or learning activities. The 1993, 1996, and 1999 dated volumes contained only one article each discussing intergenerational activities or programs. The greatest number, eight, of intergenerational program and activity articles were found in the 1997 issues of the primary edition. Finally, the total of articles that described intergenerational programs or activities in *Mailbox* (primary) was twenty-two.

In the 1990 issues of primary *Mailbox* there were five reviews of books that contained learning activities based on aging characters and/or aging information. The 1991 issues had only one book review containing suggested learning activities. In the 1992 issues, seven book reviews with selected learning activities were found. In the 1993 and 1999 years' volumes, there were two book reviews each with learning activities. Ten book reviews with selected learning activities were found in the 1994 issues. The volumes dated 1995 and 1996 contained 6 reviewed books each with accompanying learning activities. In the 1997 primary edition issues, thirteen, the highest number found of this type, were examined and analyzed. Three book reviews with selected learning activities were found and analyzed in the 1998 issues. When totaled, 55 book reviews with suggested learning activities were analyzed in the primary edition of *Mailbox*.

In the fourth and final category, "book review titles mentioning older adult characters", the quantity was higher than in any other category. Although the final total of this category was highest among the four, no book reviews of this type were found in the

1990 and 1992 issues. In each of the years' 1991 and 1999 volumes, there was only one book review title mentioning older adult characters. In the 1993 issues, three book review titles were found. There was a sharp increase, up to thirteen each, in the number of book review titles mentioning older adult characters in the 1994 and 1996-1997 dated volumes. In 1995, the magazine's issues contained four of the older adult book review titles. The 1998 issues contained fourteen book review titles of this type becoming the greatest in quantity within this category. The 1998 and 1999 issues had the lowest figures with regard to this category with 1998 issues only having one book review title, and 1999 issues having none at all. Of the four categories in which the data were analyzed in 60 issues of the primary edition of *Mailbox*, this category's total was the greatest with a final quantity of sixty-two book review titles mentioning older adult characters.

The next table depicts the data collected and analyzed when examining the 60 issues of the intermediate edition of *Mailbox*.

Table 7B

The Mailbox (Intermediate Edition)

Year	Informational with selected teaching or learning activities	Describes intergenerational programs or activities	Book reviews with selected learning activities	Book review titles mentioning older adult characters
1990	0	0	0	1
91	1	0	1	1
92	0	0	0	1
93	2	0	2	1
94	1	0	0	1
95	1	1	1	0
96	0	0	0	1
97	3	2	1	2

98	3	2	3	1
99	0	0	1	0
Totals	11	5	9	9

As seen in the table, the *Mailbox* volumes dated 1990, 1992, 1996, and 1999 of the intermediate edition did not contain any informational articles with selected teaching or learning activities. In the volume years of 1991 and 1994-1995 only one article each of this type was found. Two informational articles of the appropriate nature were located in the 1993 issues. From the years' volumes 1997-1998, there were three each of the aging related informational articles with activities, being the greatest number in this category. The total number of aging education articles containing information with teaching or learning activities in the 60 analyzed issues of *Mailbox* (intermediate) is eleven.

With regard to articles describing intergenerational programs or activities, *Mailbox* (intermediate) issues of 1990-1994, 1996, and 1999 had none. The 1995 issue contained only one article of any intergenerational content. Finally, in the years' 1997-1998 volumes two articles each were found. These articles totaled up to five in describing intergenerational programs or activities.

As in the last category mentioned, there were volumes in which no book reviews with selected learning activities were found. When examining the 60 issues of *Mailbox* (intermediate), these volumes were those dated 1990, 1992, 1994, and 1996. Volumes containing issues dated 1991, 1995, 1997, and 1999 had only one book review each with aging related learning activities. Only 1993 issues had two of these book reviews, and 1998 issues listed three book reviews, the greatest number of the category, with selected learning activities related to aging. The total of book reviews with selected learning

activities found in 60 issues of the intermediate edition of *Mailbox* was nine.

The total number of book review titles mentioning older adult characters, being nine, was the same as in the former category when the 60 issues of *Mailbox* (intermediate) were analyzed. From the volumes dated 1990-1994, and in those of 1996 and 1998 there was only one each of book review titles mentioning older adult characters. Two book review titles, the greatest number of this category, were found in the 1997 issues. Once again the total number of book review titles mentioning older adult characters, in the 60 issues of the intermediate edition of *Mailbox*, was nine.

In this study, Volumes 20-29, for a total of 88 issues, of *Teaching Pre K-8* were analyzed for aging education content. At the time of the study, the periodical was published eight times each year or monthly except for June, July, August, and December. The teaching periodical had a 1998/99 circulation of 110,000.

In order for total volumes of the periodical to be examined, three of *Teaching Pre K-8*'s 1989 issues were analyzed along with the subsequent 1990-1999 issues.

Table 8

Teaching Pre K-8

Year	Informational with selected teaching or learning activities	Describes intergenerational programs or activities	Book reviews with selected learning activities	Book review titles mentioning older adult characters
1989/90	5	3	1	2
91	0	0	0	3
92	0	0	0	0
93	1	0	2	10
94	1	0	2	1
95	2	4	3	8
96	1	1	0	3
97	1	0	0	3
98	3	0	3	6
99	1	3	1	2
Totals	15	11	12	38

In the 1989/1990 *Teaching Pre K-8* issues there were five articles considered as “informational with selected teaching or learning activities”. None of these types of articles were found in the 1991-1992 issues. The 1993-1994, 1996-1997, and 1999 years’ volumes contained one article each that was informational in nature, with the issues of 1995 having two. Of the 88 issues examined, the 1998 issue contained three informational articles with a total of fifteen for the category.

In the 1989/1990 and 1999 issues of *Teaching Pre K-8*, three articles were found that were analyzed as describing intergenerational programs or activities. Volumes of years 1991-1994 and 1997-1998 contained no articles discussing intergenerational activities or programs. The greatest number of this type of article was found in the 1995 issues with four being analyzed. In the 1996 issues only one article within the category

was examined. Of the 88 issues analyzed, final count of articles that described intergenerational programs or activities was eleven.

In the 1989/1990 and 1999 issues of *Teaching Pre K-8* there were only one book review each that contained learning activities based on aging characters and/or aging information. In the 1991-1992 and 1996-1997 issues there were no book reviews with suggested learning activities. The 1993 and 1994 years' volumes contained two reviewed books each accompanied by learning activities. In both the 1995 and 1998 years' volumes, there were three book reviews each (the highest number found of this type) with learning activities. When totaled, twelve book reviews with selected learning activities were analyzed in *Teaching Pre K-8*.

In the fourth and final category, "book review titles mentioning older adult characters", the quantity was much higher than in any other category. The 1989/1990 issues along with those of 1999 contained two such book review titles. Of the 88 issues analyzed, three book review titles each were found in the issues of 1991, 1996, and 1997. There were no book review titles found in the 1992 issues and only one in those of 1994. In the 1993 issues, the amount increased to ten in number, the highest number of book review titles mentioning older adult characters. Only one older adult book review title was mentioned in the 1994 issues. In addition to the 1993 issues' large number in this category, 1995 issues contained eight book review titles of this type. Six were analyzed in the periodical's issues of 1998. Of the four categories in which the data were analyzed, this category's total was the greatest with a final quantity of thirty-eight book review titles mentioning older adult characters.

The Reading Teacher is a peer-reviewed journal quoted as being “the journal of choice for preschool, primary, and elementary level teachers.” The International Reading Association publishes it eight times a year. At the time of the study, the circulation was 68,000.

Volumes 43-52 for a total of 85 issues of *The Reading Teacher* were analyzed for aging education content. In order for total volumes of the journal to be examined, three of *The Reading Teacher’s* 1989 issues were analyzed along with the subsequent 1990-1999 issues.

Table 9

The Reading Teacher

Year	Informational with selected teaching or learning activities	Describes intergenerational programs or activities	Book reviews with selected learning activities	Book review titles mentioning older adult characters
1989/90	6	0	5	14
91	6	0	9	32
92	6	1	3	17
93	4	0	8	34
94	11	2	3	17
95	8	2	14	14
96	2	0	10	11
97	0	0	1	23
98	3	0	0	29
99	1	0	0	6
Totals	47	5	53	197

With regard to informational articles with selected aging related teaching or learning activities, six each were found in the volumes of years 1989/90 and 1991-1992. In the 1993 issues, four articles of this nature were analyzed. The issues of 1994

possessed the greatest number of informational articles with selected teaching or learning activities being eleven. In the 1995 issues, there were eight of these types of articles with two being found in the 1996 issues. No articles of this nature were found in the 1997 issues. In the 1998 and 1999 issues, the quantities of these articles with activities numbered three and one respectively. The final total of informational articles with selected teaching or learning activities, in the 85 analyzed issues of *The Reading Teacher*, was forty-seven.

With regard to articles describing intergenerational programs or activities, *The Reading Teacher's* issues of 1989/90, 1991, 1993, and 1996-1999 had none. The 1992 issues contained only one article of any intergenerational content, and in the 1994-1995 issues two such articles were found. These articles totaled five in describing intergenerational programs or activities.

In the 1989/90 issues of *The Reading Teacher* there were five reviews of books that contained learning activities based on aging characters and/or aging information. The 1991 issues had nine book reviews accompanied by suggested learning activities. In the years' 1992 and 1994 volumes, three book reviews each with selected learning activities were found. In the 1993 issues there were eight book reviews with learning activities. In the 1995 issues, fourteen, the highest number found of this type, were examined and analyzed. Ten book reviews with selected learning activities were found in the 1996 issues. Only one book review with selected learning activities was found and analyzed in the 1997 issues, and none were present in volumes 1998-1999. When totaled, 53 book reviews with selected learning activities were analyzed in *The Reading Teacher*.

In the fourth and final category, “book review titles mentioning older adult characters”, the quantity was much higher than in any other category when the 85 issues of *The Reading Teacher* were analyzed. The 1989/1990 issues as well as those of 1995 contained fourteen such book review titles. In the 1991 issues, the amount increased to 32 in number. In the years’ 1992 and 1994 volumes, seventeen book review titles each were found. The highest number of book review titles mentioning older adult characters was analyzed in the 1993 issues being 34. In 1996, the journal’s issues contained eleven of the older adult book review titles. In addition to the 1991 and 1993 volumes’ large numbers in this category, 1997 and 1998 years’ volumes contained 23 and 29 book review titles of this type respectively. Then this count dropped significantly in the 1999 issues to the lowest amount with regard to this category only having six older adult book review titles. Of the 85 issues in which data were analyzed, this category’s total was the greatest with a final quantity of 197 book review titles mentioning older adult characters.

Social Studies and the Young Learner is a professional journal quoted as being “a quarterly for creative teaching in grades K-6.” The National Council for Social Studies publishes it four times a year. At the time of the study, the circulation was 13,000.

Volumes 2-11 for a total of 40 issues of *Social Studies and the Young Learner* were analyzed for aging education content.

Table 10

Social Studies and the Young Learner

Year	Informational with selected teaching or learning activities	Describes intergenerational programs or activities	Book reviews with selected learning activities	Book review titles mentioning older adult characters
1990	3	3	8	14
91	0	0	3	0
92	0	1	0	6
93	0	0	1	0
94	3	3	11	12
95	2	0	3	10
96	5	3	10	6
97	3	2	31	1
98	1	2	6	8
99	3	4	4	6
Totals	20	18	77	63

Of the 40 issues examined in *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, informational articles accompanied by selected aging related teaching or learning activities numbered three in each of the following years' volumes: 1990, 1994, 1997, and 1999. In volumes dated 1991-1993, no articles of this type were found. The 1995 issues contained two such articles, and the greatest amount in this category, five, was analyzed in the 1996 issues. Only one informational article with selected teaching or learning activities was found in the 1998 issues, and the total for this category was twenty.

Articles describing intergenerational programs or activities in *Social Studies and the Young Learner* numbered three in the following years' volumes: 1990, 1994, and 1996. Not any articles of this type were found in the years' volumes 1991, 1993, and 1995. One intergenerational program article was mentioned in the 1992 issues with two

being present in the 1997-1998 years' volumes. The highest number of informational articles describing intergenerational programs or activities, four, was found in the 1999 issues. The total of articles, in this category, was eighteen.

With regard to book reviews accompanied by selected aging related learning activities in *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, eight were found in the 1990 issues. In the years' volumes of 1991 and 1995, though, only three were analyzed. In the 1992 issues no book reviews of this type were found and only one was mentioned in the 1993 issues. Eleven such book reviews were examined in the 1994 issues and ten in those of 1996. Then, in the 1997 issues, the number of book reviews with selected learning activities jumped significantly to thirty-one, which was the highest quantity of the category. The figures then decreased to six in the 1998 issues and four in the issues of 1999. In all, this category's total was seventy-seven.

In *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, book review titles mentioning older adult characters numbered fourteen, the greatest amount in the category, in the 1990 issues. In 1991 and 1993 years' volumes, no book review titles of this type were found. Six older adult book review titles were mentioned in the years' volumes of 1992, 1996, and 1999. In the 1994 issues there were twelve such book titles, and in the 1995 issues there were ten. In the 1997 issues, one book review title mentioned an older adult character, and there were eight in those of 1998. The final total in this category was sixty-three.

Childhood Education is a professional refereed journal quoted as being a "balanced approach to education focusing on continuity of development across all ages of

childhood from infancy through early adolescence.” It is published six times a year by the Association for Childhood Education International. At the time of the study, the circulation was 11,700.

Volumes 67-75 of *Childhood Education* for a total of 60 issues were analyzed for aging education content.

Table 11

Childhood Education

Year	Informational with selected teaching or learning activities	Describes intergenerational programs or activities	Book reviews with selected learning activities	Book review titles mentioning older adult characters
1990	1	0	0	1
91	0	0	1	6
92	0	0	0	11
93	1	0	0	14
94	0	0	0	11
95	0	0	1	18
96	0	0	1	10
97	0	0	1	6
98	3	1	0	14
99	0	0	0	16
Totals	5	1	4	107

There were not many informational articles with suggested aging related teaching or learning activities in the 60 issues examined of *Childhood Education*. One article each was found in the issues dated 1990 and 1993. None of this type of article was present in the following years’ volumes: 1991-1992, 1994-1997, and 1999. In the 1998 issues, three informational articles accompanied by selected teaching or learning activities were found, and this was the greatest number in the category. The total in this category was five

With regard to articles describing intergenerational programs or activities in the *Childhood Education* issues of this study, not any were mentioned in the following years' volumes: 1990-1997 and 1999, and there was only one found in the 1998 issues. Therefore, the total in this category was lowest of all four with only one.

In *Childhood Education's* 60 issues analyzed, there were no book reviews with selected aging related learning activities in the following years' volumes: 1990, 1992-1994, and 1998-1999. There was only one of this type in each of the following years' volumes: 1991 and 1995-1997. The total number of book reviews with selected learning activities was four.

The number of book review titles mentioning older adult characters was much higher than any other category when analyzing the 60 issues of *Childhood Education*. The 1990 issues contained only one of these titles, but six each were found in the volumes dated 1991 and 1997. Eleven older adult book titles were mentioned in each of the years' 1992 and 1994 volumes. In the 1993 and 1998 dated volumes, fourteen book titles each were in this category. The 1995 issues listed the greatest number of older adult book titles being eighteen. Ten such book review titles were found in the 1996 issues, and sixteen were mentioned in the 1999 issues. Of the four categories, this category's total was greatest at one hundred seven.

Data gathered with regard to aging-related content found in four of the popular commercial teaching periodicals and three of the professional teaching journals were analyzed. The number and types of articles, activities, and children's books about aging, in the issues dated 1989-1999, were examined for the analyses. Table 12, below,

summarizes the data analyses' results of aging-related teaching materials from the seven selected periodicals.

Table 12

Summary of Teaching Materials from Selected Periodicals 1989-99

Periodical	Informational with selected teaching or learning activities	Describes intergenerational programs or activities	Book reviews with selected learning activities	Book review titles mentioning older adult characters
<i>Instructor</i>	16	21	35	56
<i>Schooldays</i>	1	7	7	3
<i>The Mailbox (Primary Edition)</i>	55	22	55	62
<i>The Mailbox (Intermediate Edition)</i>	11	5	9	9
<i>Teaching Pre K-8</i>	15	11	12	38
<i>The Reading Teacher</i>	47	5	53	197
<i>Social Studies and the Young Learner</i>	20	18	77	63
<i>Childhood Education</i>	5	1	4	107

With regard to the total number of informational articles that contained selected teaching or learning activities, *Instructor* magazine had sixteen. There was only one of these articles in all of the analyzed issues of *Schooldays*. Of the seven periodicals analyzed, the primary edition of *The Mailbox* contained the greatest number of these articles with a total of fifty-five. Eleven total informational articles accompanied by

activities were found in the intermediated issues of *The Mailbox*, and a total of fifteen were present in *Teaching Pre K-8*. As with *The Mailbox*, primary edition issues, the number of such articles in *The Reading Teacher* was high with a total of forty-seven. In *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, a total of twenty aging-related informational articles with selected teaching and learning activities were analyzed, and a total of five were found in *Childhood Education*.

The next category of materials identified articles that described intergenerational programs or activities. *Instructor* magazine's total was twenty-one, and seven was the total analyzed in *Schooldays*. Once again, the primary edition of *The Mailbox* contained the greatest number of articles that describe intergenerational programs or activities with a total of twenty-two. In *The Mailbox*'s intermediate issues a total of five such articles were analyzed. *Social Studies and the Young Learner* contained a total of eighteen articles that discussed intergenerational programs or activities, and only one such article was found in all of *Childhood Education*'s analyzed issues.

With regard to book reviews accompanied by aging-related learning activities, a total of 35 were found in *Instructor* magazine, and a total of seven in *Schooldays*. In this category the primary issues of *The Mailbox* contained a total of fifty-five. A total of nine book reviews with selected learning activities were found in the intermediated issues of *The Mailbox* that were analyzed. In *Teaching Pre K-8*, a total of twelve such book reviews were analyzed, and 53 was the total found in *The Reading Teacher*. The greatest total of analyzed book reviews with selected aging-related learning activities was 77 in *Social Studies and the Young Learner*. The lowest total in this category was four in

Childhood Education.

The fourth and final category of the periodicals' teaching materials that emerged, as a worthy one to analyze was book review titles mentioning older adult characters. *Instructor's* total number of these was 56, whereas *Schooldays'* total was only three. A total of 62 older adult book titles were found in the analyzed primary issues of *The Mailbox*. Nine was the total number of such book titles in *The Mailbox* intermediate issues analyzed. In *Teaching Pre K-8*, there were a total of 38 analyzed book review titles mentioning older adult characters. *The Reading Teacher* contained the greatest total in the category at one hundred ninety-seven. There were a total of 63 older adult book titles analyzed in *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, and the large total of 107 in *Childhood Education*.

The aging-related teaching materials found in seven teaching periodicals and described in the tables and text, above, were compared to some of the aging education content recommended by the National Academy for Teaching and Learning about Aging (see Appendix C). Out of more than 40 aspects of aging that are listed as recommended aging education content by the National Academy for Teaching and Learning about Aging (NATLA), 27 aspects were chosen by the researcher as most appropriate for the teaching and learning of grades K-6 students. The aspects of aging are grouped into the following five categories by NATLA: 1) Demographic aspects of aging; 2) Physical and biological aspects of aging; 3) Psychological aspects of aging; 4) Social aspects of aging; and 5) Political and economic aspects of aging.

While examining the data from the seven teaching periodicals, only seven of the

27 aspects or concepts of aging could even be inferred or brought out by an elementary teacher if/when teaching about aging. Under the category, demographic aspects of aging, some of the book reviews with selected learning activities mentioned older adults who were ethnically diverse. Under the category, physical and biological aspects of aging, some of the aging-related content suggested that physical aging is an inevitable, multifaceted process and a slow, gradual, life-long process. Under the same category, there were book reviews with selected learning activities that focused on the aspect that most living things have life cycles of patterned biological changes, and/or that death and disability can occur at any age. Under the category entitled psychological aspects of aging, the aging concept that learning can be a life-long pursuit could be found in all four categories of teaching materials. Under the category, social aspects of aging, the concept that the roles, status, and norms of age groups vary among cultures could be inferred when reading some of the book reviews accompanied by learning activities. Of the nine political and economic aspects of aging listed on Appendix C, none were found in any of the analyzed teaching materials.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Americans are gradually becoming aware of a silent but strong revolution called the “longevity revolution” that has existed for many years. The total American population has tripled since the turn of the twentieth century, but the population of adults 65 years of age or older has grown seven times. Children born today are likely to live longer lives than those of any previous generation (Pratt and Castendyk, 1978).

The “longevity revolution” has profound implications for the children of our country, because they will be facing aging issues throughout their lives. Whether we formally teach them about aging or not, children learn about it. Because aging topics are misrepresented or non-existent in K-12 curricula, and few classroom teachers have any formal education about aging, young people receive practically no formal education about later life issues.

This study addressed the need for deliberate educational intervention to solicit appropriate and relevant aging education curricular ideas for K-6 teachers. Curricular and instructional ideas provided in teaching materials, even in an informal format, can provide education, which prepares children for real life experiences. The intent of the study was to ascertain whether some elementary school teachers implemented lesson ideas or activities that they found in teaching magazine sources, and to identify and analyze teaching ideas and learning activities about aging, which appear in seven

teaching periodicals, dated 1989-1999.

Summary of Analyses' Results

To gather the data relevant to answering the research question about how much elementary teachers relied on teaching periodical articles and/or magazine articles for their teaching ideas, a short survey instrument was administered to 90 K-six teachers of a suburban school district. Thirty-nine primary (K-2) teachers and 51 intermediate (grades 3-6) teachers were asked to identify how often, always to never, they used ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines in addition to obtaining lesson ideas from ten other stated sources. The three survey statements that provided the data needed to answer the research question about teaching periodical sources are stated below along with the results.

When the 39 primary teachers were asked how often they obtained teaching ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines found in their school's media center/library, 15.4% were tallied as answering "always" with 30.8% stating "frequently." Of the primary teachers, 25.6% stated they "always" obtained teaching ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines to which they subscribed and 30.8% stated this as a frequent behavior. When asked how often they obtained teaching ideas from other teachers' teaching periodicals or magazines, 17.9% of the primary teachers responded "always," and 25.6% responded "frequently."

Of the 51 intermediate teachers, only 3.9% responded that they "always" obtained teaching ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines found in their school's media center/library, 21.6% responded "frequently," and 35.3% responded as "occasionally"

doing so. With regard to obtaining teaching ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines to which they subscribed, 17.8% responded “always,” and 27.5% responded “frequently.” When asked how often they obtained teaching ideas from other teachers’ periodicals or magazines, 5.9% of the 51 intermediate teachers stated “always,” 7.8% stated “frequently,” and 41.2% stated “occasionally.”

Other data were collected from seven teaching periodicals, especially published for grade K-6 school teachers, to find out if the periodicals dated 1989-1999 contained articles addressing ideas, concepts, and classroom activities regarding teaching about aging. Then, the relevant content gathered was analyzed for the manner in which it was presented.

Four main categories emerged with regard to how the aging education content was presented in the seven teaching periodicals. Those categories were: 1) informational articles with selected teaching or learning activities; 2) articles that describe intergenerational programs or activities; 3) book reviews with selected learning activities; and 4) book review titles mentioning older adult characters. When the final analyses from the seven periodicals were summarized, the highest amount of aging-related content was presented in book reviews with selected learning activities and/or book review titles mentioning older adult characters.

The aging-related content found and analyzed from the seven teaching periodicals was compared to 27 specific aspects of aging that the National Academy for Teaching and Learning about Aging recommends for instruction about aging. Only seven of the aspects or concepts listed could even be inferred or brought out by an elementary teacher

if/when teaching about aging. Some of the book reviews with selected learning activities mentioned older adults who were ethnically diverse, and some of the aging-related content suggested that physical aging is an inevitable, multifaceted process and a slow, gradual, life-long process. Of all the aspects recommended, the one that seemed to surface more than any other in the analyzed content were book reviews with selected learning activities that focused on the aspect that most living things have life cycles of patterned biological changes, and/or that death and disability can occur at any age. The concept that states that learning can be a life-long pursuit could be found in all four categories of analyzed teaching materials. The concept that the roles, status, and norms of age groups vary among cultures could be inferred when reading some of the book reviews accompanied by learning activities. Of the nine political and economic aspects of aging listed on Appendix C, none were found in any of the analyzed teaching materials.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Discovering through this study that a substantial number of primary and intermediate school teachers obtain teaching ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines, and finding only a few articles, instructional ideas, and intergenerational program ideas in the 533 teaching periodical issues analyzed, a deficit is obvious. The deficit in aging education content needs to be brought to the attention of the particular periodicals' editorial boards, perhaps by reputable interested organizations such as the National Academy for Teaching and Learning about Aging (NATLA). Professional aging curriculum and instruction experts or educators need to contribute more of their balanced views and knowledge about aging. By directly submitting informational articles with

selected teaching or learning activities, describing successful types of intergenerational programs or activities, and reviewing the already reviewed children's literature that suggests aging-related learning activities to the popular teaching periodicals' editorial boards, the experts make publishers and subsequently elementary teachers more aware of the importance of aging concept infusion or integration into the elementary school curriculum.

A category of analyzed content that appeared often in the teaching periodicals was book review titles that mentioned older adult characters. The key word here is "mentioned." If a teacher or librarian were to check out or purchase a book because the title mentioned an older adult, but the book did not portray the older adult(s) realistically, his/her students could hear and/or learn incorrect or ageist information about older adults and/or the aging process. Because of this possibility, teachers and librarians should consider several issues before using a book about older adults and/or aging concepts. Effective aging instruction requires sensitivity to and knowledge of generational similarities as well as differences, meaningful curriculum activities and experiences, and carefully selected instructional materials.

Before teachers and librarians use a particular book or books, they should read the book(s) carefully to determine whether the portrayal of character(s) is accurately reflecting complex human beings or characters of a stereotypical type. Teachers and librarians should learn to recognize common forms of instructional and curricular ageism or bias: stereotyping of all older adults and/or selective inclusion or exclusion of factual information, (i.e., "all older adults are frail," or "all older adults are strong and active").

Teachers and librarians should not use just one book to generalize about older adults or the aging process.

Other relevant criteria for choosing/selecting children's literature to be used in teaching about older adults or aging should include: 1) books that reflect high literacy quality in style, content, structure, beauty of language, and presentation; 2) books that might not be discovered or fully appreciated by children without introduction by a knowledgeable educator or another knowledgeable adult; 3) books that have potential for use across the curriculum—includes such strategies as reading aloud, discussion, and writing activities. Curriculum areas should include language arts, social studies, science, math, art, drama, and music. The goal of choosing and using appropriate aging-related literature should be to help children understand, accept, appreciate, and respect older adults and the aging process. Lois Lowry, author of the 1994 Newbery Medal winning book, *The Giver*, stated in an interview, “Teachers, parents, and librarians become the givers of knowledge that children will carry with themselves on whatever journey they take in life” (*The Reading Teacher*, Associate Editors: Judy Hendershot & Jackie Peck, Vol. 48, No. 4, p. 309).

Because there were not many articles, in the teaching periodicals, that described intergenerational programs or activities, coordinators of successful programs should submit more “how-to-implement” information through articles to the editorial boards of periodicals’ publishers. After consulting with aging educator professionals, senior citizen centers should look into working with children from neighborhood schools. George Hopkins who is the volunteer and intergenerational coordinator for the Community

Agency for Senior Citizens in Staten Island, New York states, “Intergenerational programs fill an important gap in the lives of many children, and they also help break down the stereotypes held by young and old alike. Intergenerational programs encourage mutual understanding and respect between generations. They give children positive role models and break down barriers created by fear and uncertainty. They give older adults needed feelings of accomplishment, worth, and joy. They offer both groups a medium through which they can share their talents and experiences” (*Phi Delta Kappan*, Vol. 82, No. 4, p. 31).

If the above-mentioned parties would follow the recommendations provided, the most popular teaching periodicals from which elementary teachers obtain teaching ideas could be a much richer resource full of activities, suggestions, and balanced book reviews. Individuals or even teams of teachers, parents, librarians, and senior citizens could collaborate as members of an education community to develop and implement age-related learning opportunities for all students.

The National Academy for Teaching and Learning about Aging (NATLA) should maintain itself as a center that provides resources teachers, parents, librarians, and any other individuals might use to learn more accurate information about aging and how to facilitate the learning of that information for others. Their already existing website may be enhanced with up-to-date resources and accurate information about aging for thousands of web browsers.

To educate our youth with a balanced and healthy view of aging, elementary teachers, working with the young students in their classrooms, should teach everything

with a life-span approach. This approach can help students become aging information literate and promote a life-long learning attitude at the same time.

Further Research

Further studies need to be conducted with regard to where teachers most often obtain their teaching ideas in order to better inform aging education experts where they need to be placing their recommended aging curricular and instructional ideas, activities, and reviews of children's literature. More exposure to aging-related teaching and learning ideas can only increase the teachers' attempts to integrate the ideas into their informal curriculum.

It also seems obvious, after conducting this study that more educational publications need to be analyzed for aging education content. If there is such a small amount of aging education ideas in teaching periodicals, how much is present in public school districts' local mandated curricular materials, students' textbooks and their supplementary materials, and university teacher education course materials?

For our youth to be accurately informed about aging and acquire more balanced views of older adults and the aging process, teaching and learning materials about aging must be easily available and accessible for all teachers. Elementary teachers, especially, are in a position to either perpetuate ageism or destroy it, for their students are younger and more easily influenced by what is modeled and/or said. Formal education about aging, for more classroom teachers, even if learned only from teaching material publications is a must.

APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

WHERE DO ELEMENTARY TEACHERS FIND THEIR TEACHING IDEAS?

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out where you obtain teaching ideas to use in your classroom(s). Your responses will be anonymous. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated in this activity.

Directions: Read each question below and circle the answer, which best fits your teaching style.

1. I obtain teaching ideas from the state and local curricular mandates.

Always Frequently Occasionally Seldom Never

2. I obtain teaching ideas from suggestions provided in the teacher's guide of textbooks.

Always Frequently Occasionally Seldom Never

3. I obtain teaching ideas from my textbooks' supplementary materials (e.g., audiotapes, videotapes).

Always Frequently Occasionally Seldom Never

4. I obtain teaching ideas from institutes or workshops.

Always Frequently Occasionally Seldom Never

5. I obtain teaching ideas from university coursework.

Always Frequently Occasionally Seldom Never

6. I obtain teaching ideas from other teachers.

Always Frequently Occasionally Seldom Never

7. I obtain teaching ideas from children's informational trade books.

Always Frequently Occasionally Seldom Never

8. I obtain teaching ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines found in my school's media center/library.

Always Frequently Occasionally Seldom Never

9. I obtain teaching ideas from teaching periodicals or magazines to which I subscribe.

Always Frequently Occasionally Seldom Never

10. I obtain teaching ideas from other teachers' periodicals or magazines.

Always Frequently Occasionally Seldom Never

11. I obtain teaching ideas from the media (e.g., newspapers, television).

Always Frequently Occasionally Seldom Never

12. I obtain teaching ideas from the Internet.

Always Frequently Occasionally Seldom Never

13. I use teaching ideas, which I develop or have developed myself.

Always Frequently Occasionally Seldom Never

14. I obtain teaching ideas from other sources.

Always Frequently Occasionally Seldom Never

If so, name them

Please check (✓) each of the following items, which are applicable to you:

1. _____ Have browsed or used ideas from *Instructor* in the past year.
2. _____ Have browsed or used ideas from *Teaching Pre-K-8* in the past year.
3. _____ Have browsed or used ideas from *Schooldays* in the past year.
4. _____ Have browsed or used ideas from *Phi Delta Kappan* in the past year.
5. _____ Have browsed or used ideas from *The Mailbox Magazine* in the past year.
6. _____ Have browsed or used ideas from *Childhood Education* in the past year.
7. _____ Have browsed or used ideas from *The Computing Teacher* in the past year.
8. _____ Have browsed or used ideas from *Classroom Connect* in the past year.
9. _____ Have browsed or used ideas from *The Reading Teacher* in the past year.
- _____ Have browsed or used ideas from *Social Studies* in the past year.
10. _____ Have browsed or used ideas from *Social Studies and the Young Learner* in the past year.
11. _____ Have browsed or used ideas from *Social Education* in the past year.
13. _____ Have browsed or used ideas from other teaching periodicals in the past year.

If so, name them:

From the periodicals numbered 1-12 above, which 3 do you use, browse, or read most often?

Please check (✓) each of the following items, which are applicable to you.

1. Your gender: _____ Male
 _____ Female

2. Your age: _____ 21-24
 _____ 25-30
 _____ 31-40
 _____ 41-50
 _____ 51-60
 _____ over 60

3. Highest level of education:

Bachelor's degree _____
Master's degree _____
Doctor's degree _____

4. Number of years' teaching experience _____

5. Number of years' teaching in this school district _____

APPENDIX B
CONTENT ANALYSIS INSTRUMENT

AGING EDUCATION CONTENT ANALYSIS INSTRUMENT
FOR
TEACHING PERIODICALS / MAGAZINES

Name of Periodical: _____

Issue's publication date: _____

Pages: _____

Article's title: _____

Author: _____

Author's experience with aging education: _____

Target audience (grade level teachers and/or subject area teachers): _____

PURPOSE(S) OR MAIN MESSAGE(S) OF THE ARTICLE:

____ INFORMATIONAL

____ Importance of and reasons for aging education

____ Addresses the aging process

____ Addresses death and dying

____ Addresses stereotypes of past and/or current children's literature

____ Cites empirical research with regard to aging education

____ Other

____ SUGGESTS SPECIFIC TEACHING OR LEARNING METHODS AND STRATEGIES

____ Inductive

____ Deductive

____ Cooperative Learning

____ Direct Instruction

____ Use of children's literature

____ Role playing

____ Other

____ DESCRIBES INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAM(S) OR ACTIVITIES

____ "Grandparent's Day" type of activities

____ Older adult volunteers working in several areas of the school

____ Older adults, from the community, visit classroom(s) to demonstrate/"teach" a skill or craft

____ One-on-one tutoring with student(s)

____ Students visit community's senior citizen center

____ Students visit community's senior citizen nursing/health facility

____ Other

APPENDIX C

NATLA's RECOMMENDED AGING EDUCATION CONTENT

NATLA's RECOMMENDED AGING EDUCATION CONTENT

Demographic Aspects of Aging

____ The older population is increasing.

____ The older population is becoming older.

____ The older population is becoming more ethnically diverse.

Physical and Biological Aspects of Aging

____ Physical aging is an inevitable, multifaceted process.

____ Physical aging is a slow, gradual, life-long process.

____ Most living things have life cycles of patterned biological changes.

____ Death and disability can occur at any age.

____ Most older adults maintain active, independent lives.

____ Lifestyle choices influence the quality and length of our lives.

____ The foundation for healthy aging is developed during youth.

Psychological Aspects of Aging

____ Significant memory loss is not normal aging.

____ Learning can be a life-long pursuit.

____ Personality and adaptability does not change as a result of age.

Social Aspects of Aging

____ Most retired people are socially engaged.

____ The roles, status, and norms of age groups vary among cultures.

____ Ageism is rooted in cultural beliefs that are learned.

____ Language reinforces stereotypes of older adults.

____ The structure and dynamics of multigenerational families are changing.

Political and Economic Aspects of Aging

____ Financial status varies widely among older persons.

____ Inequities of gender, race, and ethnicity persist into later life.

____ Early planning and savings strengthen economic health in later life.

____ Income sources and financial needs change in later life.

____ Public policies affect the well-being of older adults.

____ Public programs for older adults affect the well-being of younger people.

____ Older persons sometimes face age discrimination in the work-place.

____ Population aging confronts society with difficult ethical choices.

____ Population aging creates new business and career opportunities.

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